

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, May 19, 1901, with transcript, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Florence, May 19, 1901. My darling Alec:

What will you say to our not going to Berlin after all? It's a great disappointment and I know I shall regret the lost opportunity all my life, but after what has happened to Mrs. McKinley I can't but feel more than ever that I have acted wisely in giving it up. I couldn't run any risk with Mamma even for Daisy's possible chances. For whenever Mamma has got very thoroughly tired she has had an attack of diarrhea which of course is weakening. Fortunately she has had this only twice, once in London and again very slightly in Palermo. But she is very tired now, and says herself that while perfectly well she feels that for her to try to go on would not be safe. She might "snap." Accordingly we have rested here for over a fortnight, the longest time we have stayed in any one place since leaving Paris. Tuesday we go on to Venice and thence to Milan and Geneva where I expect to leave Mamma. It really is very flattering to see how unwilling both Mamma and Gipse are to have us go, they feel all right while we are here, but afterwards they don't know what is to become of them, and they don't want all Grace's children, however glad they would be to see Grace herself and one of them. I shall try to have Mamma settled before I leave, but Mamma herself says that she can no longer decide things, it is too hard work now and tires her all out, and I must tell her what to do. Now don't you see that I really have been needed here Alec dear. I wouldn't if Mamma were younger, but she certainly is not the decided woman she was, 2 although once she has made up her mind nothing will turn her from it. But she does not like to make up her mind.

It is lovely here, not hot, or even very warm at times it is cold and I never drive without a coat.

Library of Congress

I have sent to Berlin for the catalogue of your books and will do the best I can to get you a library. I have not heard from you for a long time except for the note enclosing the O.B. and Q power. I hope you are not angry with me for staying away. It hurts me to think of you being displeased, but never the less I have been so situated that unless you or Elsie were ill it would have seemed positive cruelty to leave. You see Grace is in England now, but means to spend the summer in Switzerland. We are near Switzerland now, to have gone to Berlin would have taken Mamma all across Europe, with the obligation to return all alone or with Grace and her children, neither of which she is fit for. How she wants to be taken somewhere and left where she can be comfortable until Grace comes, she hopes not before July. We could not have avoided our stay here, for Mamma was too tired to go on.

I hope you are in Baddeck now, I want to hear from you very much. I love you.

Yours, Mabel.